The Chasm & the Abyss: Queer Theory and the Socialities of Queer Youth Suicide

Rob Cover

STRESZCZENIE: "Pęknięcie i przepaść: teoria *queer* a społeczne uwarunkowania samobójstw wśród młodzieży o nienormatywnej seksualności"

Poniższy artykuł używa teorii *queer,* aby dowieść, że istnieją konkurujące ze sobą socjalizacje, dyskursy oraz "platformy" seksualności, przy czym dominujące dyskursy seksualności, dla których warunkiem społecznej przynależności i uczestnictwa jest podmiotowość oparta na heteronormatywnej lub homonormatywnej socjalizacji, stanowią czynnik ryzyka w odniesieniu do samobójstw notowanych wśród młodzieży o nienormatywnej seksualności.

Dokonując analizy raportu opisującego przypadek samobójstwa młodej osoby, artykuł korzysta z *queerowych* teorii podmiotowości, butlerowskiej performatywności oraz derridiańskiego odczytania "chory", aby pokazać, jak odczuwana seksualność, której jednostka nie jest w stanie zintegrować z dominującymi dyskursami seksualności (co uniemożliwia podmiotowi wypracowanie spójności, czytelności i rozpoznawalności, będących podstawą poczucia społecznej przynależności), otwiera przepaść między współzawodniczącymi logikami seksualności, co z kolei może stanowić czynnik ryzyka prowadzący do samobójstw wśród *queerowej* młodzieży.

Zdaniem autora, ryzyko samobójstwa spowodowanego (problemami z) seksualnością wśród młodzieży może zostać zredukowane poprzez artykulację *queerowych,* płynnych i polimorficznych pozytywności seksualnych oraz poszerzenie dostępnych dyskursów, platform, tożsamości oraz form socjalizacji ekspresji seksualnej.

After two decades of queer theory, as the application of poststructuralist theory in the fields of gender and sexuality, we have a powerful set of tools for the investigation and understanding of the complexity, multiplicity and cultural constitution of sexual identity. These tools, however, are rarely used in contemporary discussions, academic literature, intervention strategies, policy and service provision for youth at risk of suicide and self-harm. Whether suicide is understood through mental health frameworks

or through the relationship between the individual and sociality, it is never disconnected from the ways in which identity is constructed and performed in cultural contexts; this connection is even more pertinent in the case of sexuality which, unlike other axes of identity, involves particularly trajectories of *becoming* in a normalising framework, whether those be heteronormative or homonormative 'expectations'. Drawing on the insights of queer theory on the constructedness and multiplicity of sexuality, this paper seeks to provide a framework for future pragmatic ways in which sexuality-related risk factors in youth suicide can be addressed by opening the field of 'available discourses' of sexuality. It discusses some of the ways in which the *constraint* of sexuality under the regime of the hetero/homo binary can be understood as contributing to youth suicides. It is to see that, for an individual subject, *felt* sexual erotics that may fall outside the dominant discourses of sexuality and remain unrepresented poses a significant risk in a society which demands a particularly narrow set of sexual identities (hetero/homo) and subjective coherence, intelligibility and recognisability (Cover, "Queer Subjects of Suicide").

The cultural demand to articulate a sexual selfhood that is unified and that conforms with the hetero/homo binary is not, of course, all-pervasive. There are subjects who are under-resourced or unable to access discourses which make alternatives possible (such as queer theory itself, or other queer-radical sexual depictions). Subjects whose erotic desires that have been produced and constituted otherwise, perhaps through forms of erotics and erotic desire that are not articulable by *gender choice* as the categorisation of sexual self-definition and that cannot be reconciled with the dominant demands to conform to 'authorised' heterosexual and homosexual identities and stereotypes (Cover, "Bodies, Movements and Desires"). For such subjects, risk occurs in the inability to be constituted as a *recognisable* sexual subject, in the inability to be produced in a manner that is socially coherent and culturally intelligible. In this scenario, it can be argued, suicide becomes the result of the fragmentation of stable identity due to the inability of a subject to be coherent in dominant terms resulting from the lack of *available* alternatives that might be more suitable to a personal course of sexuality; sociality and belonging are thus impossible, and a breakdown in sociality leads to suicide as a possible response (Durkheim 208). That is, from a queer theoretical perspective, identity is always a process and it is a process which sometimes can fail. Those with *access* to the available discourses to forge subjectivity and sociality within a postmodernising society can embrace the complexity, fluidity and sexual amorphousness of alternatives to the narrow, dominant, legitimate discourses of sexuality. But for those without access to available discourses, cultural skills or knowledge, the distinction

between (a) sexual desires that have manifested through the body in ways which may not be easily assimilable to the given gender-trajectories (same-sex, opposite-sex) of dominant sexual discourse, and (b) the cultural demand, experienced in the everyday, that we *must* classify ourselves in the limited terms of the hetero/homo binary (Sedgwick, "How to Bring Your Kids up Gay" 117) leads to an incapacity to act, an inability to perform a coherent self, an impossibility of selfhood that spirals into self-ish unintelligibility and what John Caputo refers to as the abyss of suicide (Caputo 239); what might be called the unbearable pain not 'of being', but of 'being-not', or 'being-not-quite'.

The application of queer theory to the entire field of youth suicide and self-harm is a massive undertaking too large for a single paper. What I would like to do in this essay is explore the ways in which the multiply-constituted subject, competing socialities and available/unavailable discourses are implicated in risk factors for youth suicide. Much analysis of sexuality-related youth suicides tends to 'read' suicide cases as being about a refusal to come-to-terms with *really* being lesbian or gay in a positive framework (McDaniel 96-97; Battin 12; Macdonald & Cooper 23-24; Dorais 24). On the other hand, it is possible to read such cases through queer theory as an inability to be intelligibly *categorised* as lesbian/gay or straight within the multiple constitutions of sexual selfhood. I thus want to show how the disjuncture between sexuality that one affectively *feels one has* and the demand that we classify ourselves as hetero or homo, opens for some people a dangerous 'abyss' between the *felt* sexuality and the *only available* (dominant) platform by which to intelligibly express sexual coherence. By utilising queer-theoretical interrogations of sexual subjectivity, it can be said that the inability to draw the two together results from an incapability to see that subjects are multiply-constructed, and that pragmatic approaches to youth suicide need to take this into account alongside embracing the breadth of competing discourses of sexuality. I want to end by showing how this abyss produces a fragmented subjectivity and a reduction in an attachment to sociality and living leading to suicide and to make some initial suggestions towards resourcing at-risk younger persons within a queer theory framework by expanding the available ways by which sexual multiplicity can be understood.

Coherence, Platforms and Identity Paradigms

As a condition of contemporary subjectivity, we are required to present ourselves as coherent, intelligible and recognisable to others and to ourselves. As Judith Butler points out, there is a cultural imperative to do so in order to engage in belonging and social participation (Gender Trouble 143). This sociality is not, in the terms often given in dialogue about non-heterosexual youth, the

idea of moving from social isolation to participation in a geographic or online community. Rather it is the sociality of conforming to particular, culturally-legitimated forms of subjectivity through articulating oneself as coherent, unified, intelligible and recognisable. The imperative to perform 'in accord' with given categories, labels and identities (Butler, "Gender Insubordination" 18) is not only a node of compulsory regimentation and an operation of violent exclusion of the incoherent; it is also a fiction that provides a source of personal comfort and a sense of 'fitting in' (Weeks 43-4). Coherence is thus a normative ideal, although conforming to such normativity is never guaranteed. Participation in sociality and sexuality depend on articulating an intelligible and recognisable subjectivity smoothed over of irregularities and glitches, open to transformation but only through linearity, confession and revelation. While it is true, of course, that sexual practices are often discussed from the perspective of conflict, irregularities and inconsistencies, discussions around sexual identity tend to attempt to cover over the irregular or the un-recognisable or that which is not clearly 'heteronormative' or 'homonormative', requiring the sexual subject to weave oneself together into a unity that is recognisable to ourselves and to others in line with the dominant and over-simplified hetero/homo binary. As Clare Farquhar put it, "the perceived pressure to adopt a sexual label . . . may sometimes mask more fluid understandings of the construction and meaning of sexuality and sexual identity" (Farquhar 225).

Poststructuralist queer theory draws attention to the fact that the *dominant, sanctioned* and *legitimate* discourse of sexuality presents a widespread cultural requirement that sexual desire be coherently and clearly directed either to one gender or the other (or sometimes both), but not that one articulate sexuality in any way which excludes gender from being the *essential* base-line criteria of sexual categorisation. The dominant cultural logic of sexuality, in other words, is that which predicates all erotic desire and behaviour as the emanation of an innate, essentialist identity that is either heterosexual or homosexual (or sometimes bisexually both), and the regimental 'truth' of this discourse rests on the marginalisation or exclusion of alternative frameworks for understanding or expressing sexuality. What is upheld in the dominant discourse is a notion of gender as the position from which the subject enacts attraction in the direction of an equally gendered subject. Gender, as Sedgwick points out, is *definitionally* built into determinations of sexuality (Epistemology of the Closet 31). That is, the performativity of the heterosexual or homosexual subject is conditioned by the *gendering* of all erotic desire and the presentation of sexual desire and action as one of two trajectories (same-sex or opposite-sex) from a gendered subject to a gendered object. This is, of course, the *legitimate* or *official* account of sexuality disseminated across

medical, psychological, political, legislative and media discourses. A lesbian or gay subjectivity, for example, means nothing without a cultural construction of gender and the *necessity* of *same-sex* attraction as a descriptor of lesbian/gay practice. This is the heterosexual matrix described by Butler and which, in her view, is used to govern the heterosexual complementarity that props up masculine and feminine gender norms (Gender Trouble 151-6). Currently its dominance depends on a repudiation of alternative discourses of sexuality or ways of making sexuality coherent and recognisable to a broader society, and this occurs not through denouncing but through the marginalisation or, in contemporary media, making unavailable of alternatives to strict heterosexuality and strict homosexuality (Cover, "First Contact").

What queer theory points to is that there is no foundational, logical, biological or ethical reason why sexuality should be shackled to gendered objects-of-attraction, that there are ways to think about, critique and perform erotic-desire that are different from the contemporary cultural imperative of sexual-beings dichotomised as heterosexual and homosexual. Eve Sedgwick suggests that certain

"dimensions of sexuality, however, distinguish object-choice quite differently (e.g., human/animal, adult/child, singular/plural, autoerotic/alloerotic) or are not even about object choice (e.g., orgasmic/nonorgasmic, noncommercial/commercial, using bodies only/using manufactured objects, in private/in public, spontaneous/scripted.) (Epistemology of the Closet 35)"

There are also discernible trajectories generally not encompassed in dialogue on sexuality. Gender- *any* concept of gender-might be discharged entirely from a trajectory of erotic desire. Time, space, place, the disunified body, or, as Elizabeth Grosz hints, body-parts that are not usually constituted as libidinal or gendered zones (Volatile Bodies 139), may well be the codes or factors which constitute the naming of a sexual act and the codes that make sexual desire intelligible. In other words, there are a range of possible logics that can organise sexual thinking, and *gender* is only *commonly* considered the primary factor in (sexual, emotional) attraction because it is the result of deployments of disciplinary power. Forms of sexual fluidity and configurations of sexual subjecthood that are not dependent on gender-based trajectories of desire arise at the margins of contemporary culture, but they depend for cultural intelligibility, stability and identity on the sociality of a recognisable logic. It is true that some people might be positioned to cite a discourse or discursive platform that permits the coherent construction of a fluid, non-gender-trajected sexuality, and are subsequently able to make sense of it to themselves and to others

such that there will be little problem functioning as a subject, engaging in sociality and social participation and forms of belonging.

The presentation of any coherent sexuality depends on the capacity to use-and be constituted within-discourses which are socially recognisable, even if historical and disciplinary. This is not to say that there are no alternative discourses that allow us to present an 'argument of the sexual self' that is equally intelligible and coherent, but what is always required is an available discourse or cultural logic to serve as a 'platform' for the expression of self-identity. Such a platform is the field from which we cite the signifiers, categories, stereotypes and culturally-acknowledged behaviour that is recognised and recognisable to ourselves. For example, a straight person or a gay man or a lesbian depends for the intelligible articulation of sexual identities on the platform that arranges sexuality into dichotomous hetero/homo, fixed identity terms. Another person, perhaps someone who has adopted the term 'queer' as a self-reference, might be depending on a platform that predicates sexuality as fluid and amorphous. Still another might locate erotic desire away from gender altogether and express, for example, a felt sexuality that centres upon the distinction between public and private space as the primary category of choice and desire. This would be, then, a platform by which her sexuality is intelligible: perhaps she simply says to herself that she's "into public sex" regardless of gender. Freudian 'polymorphous perversity' is one code which presents a particular 'logic' of sexuality different from the strictures of hetero/homo classification (Freud 78); the terms 'sex radical,' 'hedonism' or 'experimentation' are key words belonging to others. To work as a platform for the intelligibility of sexual desire, the discourses, concepts and recognitions must first be available to that subject, as well as the capacity to disavow the 'truth' of the dominant sexual regime.

Indeed, such discursive platforms of intelligible sexuality that do not depend on an articulation of gender-trajected heteronormativity and homonormativity can be found in popular culture. The vampires, for example, in Anne Rice's novels *Interview with the Vampire* (1976) and *The Vampire Lestat* (1985), do not make gender a criteria for their erotic pleasures. They are in fact incapable of normative sex (their genitals do not 'work') and instead disperse their erotic feeling across the body, experience pleasure through alternative forms of penetration (biting and exchanging blood) and sometimes through the erotics of non-tactile speech and visuality. Indeed, the vampire has variously been presented as a creature of polymorphous pleasure (Verhoeven 273) and this figuration of the androgynous, fluidic outsider has direct input into some formations of contemporary goth subculture and other recent if marginal youth

ethos (Latham). Underground rave culture during the 1990s, which began on the social margins and fostered new arrangements of otherness (Gaillot 30), has presented such a code of fluid sex-play and experimentation (McKnight 51) that disregards gender as a criteria for sexual choice, as the film *Groove* (2000), for example, attests. Other platforms might have reduced use of *obvious* sexual category signifiers: to have "good sex" or "sweat-pouring-off-you" sex (Farquhar 227) regardless of gendered objects of choice is to describe and categorise sexuality in terms of intensity of experience rather than embodied encounter. In other words, there are many sites through which alternatives to hetero/homo normative sexualities can be intelligibly articulated and through which an alternative sexual identity can be recognisable and coherent.

The Experience of Youth

While many persons forge a (hetero or homo) sexual identity on the platform of the dominant discourse, others are able to articulate diverse, differential, contingent or fluid sexual behaviours, desires and identities by grounding their coherence on the more marginal platforms available. But what of those multiply-constituted subjects for whom sexuality and erotics have been formed in ways incompatible with the dominant discourses and thereby outside of cultural intelligibility and the sociality of coherent subjectivity? That is, for those subjects who do not have access to an 'available discourse' by which to articulate and perform in accord with the cultural demand for intelligible sexual identity? Younger persons-by virtue of being younger-have less access to diverse discourses and less experience of the diversity of approaches to sex and sexuality, and this is particularly so in cultures in which sexual and erotic material continues to be censored from the young. This may be the result of limited education, media or cultural literacy; limited access to a wider array of discourses either because they are made unavailable, because they have limited internet or communicative possibilities, or because there are strictures within their environment that prevent them from coming to the understanding that there are no fixed 'truths' to a topic or idea or way in which to forge a life and, pertinently, an erotic life. Sometimes this is a lack of experience in seeing the contingent and polysemic nature of cultural logics-indeed, not an easy thing to achieve for both adults and children untrained in poststructuralist approaches such as queer theory. For *most* young people this lack of alternatives is not going to be an issue or even of interest, and a comprehensible sexual identity will be formed within a platform of sexuality that that is culturally-recognisable or logical. Others will have the capabilities or the resilience to adapt and overcome these issues. But, within this logic, there will be those at the margin who are unable to effectively forge a coherent sexual identity, and this is the vulnerable and at-risk group for whom a more nuanced understanding of sexuality

can contribute to helping prevent the risk of suicide and self-harm as I detail further below.

One of the problems for young persons is that they are censored from sexual discourses until a culturally-legitimate age at which they are then required to encounter that discourse and articulate a coherent sexual identity; that is, to incorporate sexuality as an aspect of their subjectivities (Russell 1249). It must be remembered, however, that the inaccessibility of discourses of sexuality does not mean there is no childhood sexuality at all. Indeed, to say so is to return to the old idea that the pre-pubescent child has no form of sexuality-a fact we know not to be true, despite the persistence in our culture of the claim that children are purely innocent (Sedgwick, "How to Bring Your Kids Up Gay" 3). Gary Dowsett points out that there are many children who engage in what we might think of as same-sex or opposite-sex erotic behaviour, oblivious of definition, categorisation and the typically-sanctioned discourse of sexuality with its hetero/homo identity configurations (32). Pat Califia finds that the experience of children is of a sexual play but one in which the "erotic becomes a vast, unmapped wilderness whose boundaries are clearly delineated by averted eyes. Sex becomes the thing not seen, the word not spoken, the forbidden impulse, the action that must be denied" (39). It remains that children do experience forms of erotics, sex and sexual behaviour with each other, with adults, in the engagement with media and literary texts and through speech and gossip and rumour, but often in ways made amorphous by the prevention or denunciation of the dominant discourses of sexuality. It is, however, at a culturally-sanctioned age that children first encounter dominant discourses which will *prescribe* the identities of heterosexual and homosexual.

If, as queer theory attests, younger persons will not innately or naturally follow a path towards hetero- or homo-normative sexual identity development but will encounter discourses that subject and constitute ways of *being* sexual, then it can be acknowledged that individualised experiences of sexuality have just as much legitimacy for the performativity of sexual subjectivity. While childhood erotic experiences, as disparate and perhaps individualistic as they might be, are not part of the legitimate discourses of sexuality, they may form the basis of an alternative discourse as, in Foucauldian terms, a *body of rules* (Foucault, Archaeology of Knowledge 47-8). That body of rules might be just as significant for the formation of sexual desires as is the 'encounter' with dominant discourses at the culturally-legitimated age (puberty, usually) and play a role in developing a certain sexual subjectivity. However, we must ask after those for whom the childhood experiences of fluid and amorphous erotics are significant enough in the production of erotic desire but are *wholly unassimilable* to the

compulsion to re-configure subjectivity as (hetero or homo) sexual subjectivity. For those who might stumble on Anne Rice's vampires or queer radical motifs or any other site of polymorphous sexual representation, those subjects will have *accessed* a platform by which to make such erotic behaviour or desire coherent and intelligible. But for those who do not-for those who are left with the banal, narrow categories of the hetero/homo binary-what pressure does this regimentation put upon them, and what does it do to make subjectivity unstable in a format that presents suicide as the outcome of such fragmentation or impossibility of selfhood?

Reading Suicide

An article in the *Akron Beacon Journal* of January 4 1998 gave a lengthy description of the suicide (a year earlier) of fourteen-year-old Robbie Kirkland. Although an isolated case, it follows the pattern of many accounts of sexuality-related youth suicide which, on an initial reading, indicates identity confusion and difficulties in developing a positive attitude to lesbian/gay sociality lead to depression and the unbearability of living as risk factors for youth suicide (Dorais 44). However, the case also demonstrates the argument that suicide attempts are available to be read differently in terms of the available knowledges around sexuality and identity. Prior to his suicide, Kirkland had made at least one attempt, and had absconded from home. As the news story describes, in addressing his earlier depression, a therapist confirmed "that Robbie was gay", a fact accepted by his family: "His father, John Kirkland; his stepfather, Dr. Peter Sadasivan; and his sisters Danielle, Claudia and Alexandria tried desperately to make Robbie feel normal." The support from his family appears to be overwhelming and is discussed in a gay-affirmative tone of liberal positivity. "But Robbie refused to attend local gay support meetings with his mother, and refused to speak to gay friends she wanted to bring home for him to meet. His depression grew worse" (Kinz). One reading of this article depicts Kirkland's suicide as the result of being a young homosexual male who, despite a supportive environment, has refused to accept positively his non-heterosexuality, become depressed and taken the terrible path towards suicide.

However, within the queer-theoretical approach to identity and multiplicity of sexual selfhood described above, it is possible to read the news story otherwise (which is not to assert an alternative truth here): Kirkland's suicide might well have had nothing to do with overwhelming homophobia, shame or inability to act on his desires, or a depression brought upon by a sense of intolerance of his sexuality. It is unknown why he committed suicide-the reasons belong to Kirkland alone. But this tragic act can be read through queer theory as being the response to an inability or unconscious refusal to be *either* straight or gay, to be assigned a category within

the dominant discourses of sexuality, to articulate sexual identity based on the available platforms of logic. As the article suggests, his parents attempted to 'affirm' he was 'gay'. At an early age, Kirkland may well have been experiencing a fluid or non-gender-based understanding of sexuality-albeit, as the rhetoric goes, a 'confused' one. His refusal to affirm a gay identity can be read alternatively as an incompatibility with the authorised, homo-positive discourses and the hetero/homo binary depiction of sexual subjectivity-as the result of being sexually-constituted differentially. While therapists and parents read his non-normativity as 'gay', his desires indeed may have been incoherent to himself, unknowable in terms of the dominant hetero/homo logic presented to him as *the* logic of sexuality and unrecognisable by the expert and the family. The gay identity was *conferred* on him, by 'expert' therapists, by caring parents, and by a discursive framework which demands the performativity of sexual identity in narrow, legitimised terms. But that interpellation may not have been compatible with his felt erotics, placing him in a vulnerable position in which sociality through identity coherence becomes impossible.

In this reading, Kirkland's suicide may thus have been brought on by his resistance to self-categorisation of this unintelligible desire as compatible with hetero/homo regimentation. His *refusal* of the 'hail' of discourse to subjectivity-while possibly having no other 'available discourse' or 'platform' through which to articulate these desires-points to an inability of discourse to synthesise wholly or capture the full complexity and multiplicity of erotics. This suicide formation stems, effectively, from the shame-causing failure to meet expectations of normativity (Fullager 297), but we are no longer talking about normativity as heteronormativity. Rather, it is in the failure to present identity coherence *at all* that suicide becomes the logical means by which to cease the pain of dislocation from normative sociality. Resistance, in some formations, is failure, and this is where the celebration of refusals to accept conferred identities need be wary of the ways in which such dislocations due to unintelligibility can be debilitating and dangerous.

For a subject such as Kirkland (at least in terms of a queer theory reading of this news article), the available platform for the expression of sexuality, identity and desire was limited to 'gay', regardless of his actual experiences and any notion he might have had to desire otherwise, whether conscious or unconscious (Ahmed 149). In not having access to alternative, radical or competing discourses of sexuality, a coherent social identity becomes impossible, resulting in marginalisation and unintelligibility. If we can read his sexuality as being neither compatibly nor coherently heterosexual or homosexual, nor even the 'catch all' category of the bisexual or the "bi-curious" (Farquhar

231), then we need to utilise queer theory's interrogation of sexual subjectivity to understand how the multiply-constituted, complex subject is made vulnerable and placed at risk by the 'unavailability' of a broader, competing range of sexual discourses.

Queer Fluidity as a Bodily Residue

To understand the queer theorisation of suicide through the framework of fragmentary selfhood as I have been describing it requires interrogating the multiply-constituted subject a step further to show how the disjuncture between (a) the cultural demand for sexual identity coherence in line with dominant discourses depicting the hetero/homo binary, and (b) the 'residue' of felt erotics that have no available discourse for recognition can open a path towards forms of identity breakdown and loss of sociality which can thereby lead to suicide as a response to a loss of sociality (Durkheim 208). This disjuncture emerges in the multiplicity of selfhood, and it is this which too often is forgotten in accounts which reduce and regiment sexual identity to a singular category. Drawing on Richard Rorty, Mike Featherstone points out that we are best off thinking of the self as "a bundle of conflicting 'quasi-selves', a random and contingent assemblage of experiences" (Featherstone 45). Despite both the critique of stable, essentialist subjectivity that comes through poststructuralist theory and through postmodern subject fragmentation emerging with consumer culture and a culture of virtuality, the enlightenment subject of modernity as a myth of the fixed, stable individual continues to reign in western culture (Cover, "From Butler to Buffy" 2). It requires that subjects ensure their own coherence but at the same time take the opportunity to perform identities diversely and differentially, transforming selves across time. As Butler writes:

"To prescribe an exclusive identification for a multiply constituted subject, as every subject is, is to enforce a reduction and a paralysis. . . . When the articulation of coherent identity becomes its own policy, then the policing of identity takes the place of a politics in which identity works dynamically in the service of a broader cultural struggle toward the rearticulation and empowerment of groups that seeks to overcome the dynamic of repudiation and exclusion by which 'coherent subjects' are constituted. (Bodies That Matter 116-117)"

This is the crisis of subjectivity, this push-and-pull between calls to coherence and always-present fragmentation.

For Butler, bodies are materialised in ways which, over time, produce the effect of boundary, fixity and unity (Bodies That Matter 9). In a body that is not fully materialised-and no body ever is, since materialisation is an ongoing process-there is the possibility of

a residue which leaves a gap between the bodily movements/desires and the desires that can be, alternatively, located in that which cannot be materialised or subjectified (Butler, "Appearances Aside" 59). If part of that involves, as for Butler, the materialisation of particular types of bodies *in accord* with the subjectivity being performed, but if such subjectification is never complete, then what of the body 'parts' that do not simultaneously materialise in accord with given subjective identity? The body is never *completely* materialised in accord with discourse, and the animate flesh will never fully be subjectified within dominant, regimentary discourses. Rather, we can argue that it sometimes speaks its *own* language and desires its own desires, perhaps at odds with the desires by which the interpellated subject is impelled to perform. That is, there is an erotics which seeks pleasure that the subject is not necessarily able to comprehend in terms of the dominant, legitimate and available discourses of sexuality, but would require an alternative platform to be able to articulate and express this in ways which meet the social demand for recognisable sexual selfhood.

Queer fluidity and unnameable erotics may be based in disparate experience as a discourse in itself, but may not necessarily be conscious to the subject. It might appear to be repressed or marginalised in favour of performing a culturally-recognisable sexuality; that is, in line with the sanctioned discourses which impel a subject *to be* heterosexual or homosexual. But repression of desires *produced otherwise* is never complete. Rather, the trace of what is repressed, forgotten, disproven, sidelined or disavowed is always present in some form-there is always *residue* . What I want to leave open is the prospect of a queer erotic 'residue' that belongs in the cognition of the flesh. By this, I mean to suggest that the flesh has its own linguistic competencies, its own languages, its own understandings; cognitions which are not necessarily available to the re-cognisability of the performative effect of discursive formations and which are 'beyond' the reach of demands for coherent dominant identities. It has particular ways of playing, ways of feeling satisfied or comfortable or comforted that may have emerged through paths alternate to sanctioned behaviours. In other words, there can sometimes be a distinction between linguistic performativity and codes of coherence, and the performativity of bodies which are part of the complex multiplicity of subjecthood. None of this is to make a claim to a natural, material and essential body in opposition to the operations of discourse, for that would be to assert there is a real (bodily) sexuality overcome by an ideological (discursive) false consciousness-something of which Foucault has warned us is unproductive (Power/Knowledge 118). Instead, it is a matter of looking to the complexity of subjectivity and sexuality to see that there are traces of what cannot be avowed through/in

discourse that emerges through ways in which bodies are constituted. What is produced in this scenario, then, is a gap or an abyss between different and varied productions of codes of desire, different platforms or logics of erotic sensibility and sensation.

The notion of a repressed or disavowed desire is not, of course, new, but has been variously articulated in psychoanalytic and poststructuralist theory, typically whereby the repressed desire in the former is natural or originary and in the latter is constructed but not in a dominant way. For Freud, polymorphous sensations and diffuse pleasures emerge at birth, and are emanated across the entire body as a natural formation of certain drives which, through the Oedipal conflict are repressed or 'forgotten' as culturally unacceptable desires (Evans 34). The disposition to be polymorphously perverse in sexuality remains with the individual in Freud's view, even if in the interests of civilisation it is repressed (Creed 22-23). In psychoanalysis, this polymorphous desire is, as Butler has put it in her reading of Lacan, the 'residue' of the union of mother and child, "the affective memory of a pleasure prior to individuation" (Subjects of Desire 187). Later theorists who utilise psychoanalysis, such as Herbert Marcuse, expanded on the idea of the repression of polymorphous perversity as strategically repressed, with sexuality directed towards the genitals-and hence gender-advocating an enlarged and intensified sexuality to overcome the risk of neuroses that result from the repression of such diverse desires (Kellner 431). For Julia Kristeva, this polymorphousness is the abject which must be radically kept in check in order that the subject can define itself as a subject (Grosz, Jacques Lacan 87); at the same time, Kristeva posits the repressed drives using the term 'the semiotic' as distinct from the law-providing 'symbolic' of Lacan (Grosz, Sexual Subversions 42). While both contribute to subjectification, the semiotic refers to the "energies, rhythms, forces and corporeal residues necessary for representation . . . dispositional and organisational structure of the drives . . . in their polymorphous, undifferentiated state" (Grosz, Sexual Subversions 43). As the inscription of polymorphous impulses across the child's body, it returns as residue of the body-in-language, although must be disavowed for its "anarchic, formless circulation of sexual impulses and energies . . . *before* sexuality is ordered and hierarchically subsumed under the primacy of genitality" as organised by the symbolic (Grosz, Sexual Subversions 43-44). In each of these approaches, there is repression which is, of course, never complete.

Working against the repressive hypothesis of psychoanalysis, a Foucauldian or discursive approach in poststructuralism reads such residues differently. What is often missed in discussions of the social and discursive construction of the subject is that this subject is

constituted multiply, giving the body, the psyche and the self meaning and bringing these into view in particular ways which respond to regulatory norms (Barker 27). Lacking in this approach is an acknowledgment of there being a range of constitutive moments and events, with some coming to be more dominant in forging the self than others which will produce elements or co-ordinates of identity at the margins (Hall 69). While such erotics may not be natural 'drives' in the early psychoanalytic sense as they are also constructed and realised in discourse, their marginalisation from the subject's conscious and reflexive coherence makes them a residue of having been constituted *otherwise* . More recently, some theorists have turned to the ways in which affect operates at a bodily level in producing certain elements of materiality and subjectivity differently. For example, in her reading of Brian Massumi's recent work, Patricia Clough points to the indeterminacy of autonomic bodily responses that operate as an excess of affect, a virtual remainder that is subtracted and smoothed over to fit the *conscious requirements* of continuity and linear causality, which sees the conscious performance of identity as subtractive because it reduces complexity but leaves a remainder or residue. Such a turn to the body's indeterminacy is not to posit a 'pre-social' body or a set of natural drives, but to look to the multiple socialities of selfhood which are neither linear nor deterministic but manifold and conflicting (3).

Unspeakable Dread: Bodies, The Residual and The Chora

What, then, of the younger person whose body speaks a sexuality that has no name? It longs for other bodies in certain configurations that might not be figured as gendered bodies, that might not be bodies-of-genitals and that might not be bodies interlocking in heteronormative or homonormative formations. The youth who is asked to articulate himself or herself as *heterosexual* or *homosexual,* and sees that to belong and to participate in contemporary sociality such an articulation is necessary, but experiences bodily a set of desires totally unassimilable to those narrow categories is denied the sociality of normativity. That residue that cannot be made intelligible is unable to be re-configured or re-constituted *in accord* with the 'official' language of contemporary liberal-humanist sexuality. Again, this is not to suggest that there is some *felt sexuality* external to discourse altogether-only to the discourses 'available' to that subject. Butler is uncertain about the possibility of any exterior to language, suggesting that "[t]o posit by way of language a materiality outside of language is still to posit that materiality, and the materiality so posited will retain that positing as its constitutive condition" (Bodies That Matter 30). Any outside or exterior is always constituted in terms of the interior. However, it is possible to signify the concept of a space in which-for a particular subject-a particular language or discourse or logic or platform has no compatibility with another, perhaps dominant, discourse by which

we are to be aligned under the cultural imperative of coherence and intelligibility.

This point can best be comprehended by utilising Jacques Derrida's theory of the *khora* (or 'chora'). For Derrida, the chora as a receptacle or container can be thought; it has a concept that can be signified, but what it *contains* cannot. The chora signifies a place that "belongs neither to the sensible nor to the intelligible, neither to becoming, nor to non-being (the *khora* is never described as a void)" ("How to Avoid Speaking" 36). But what can be contained in the chora? The unsignifiable, the unknowable. For Derrida, it is *the beyond* "that exceeds the opposition between affirmation and negation" ("How to Avoid Speaking" 20). Thus, the chora is situated beyond the margins of specific available discourses. This container contains, then, that which is truly *unspeakable* or at least unspeakable in the language of expectation. These are desires or sexual sensibilities wholly unassimilable to the legitimate discourse or sanctioned behaviour; those which go against the grain of that trajectory, and do not operate on the same discursive platform of intelligibility. This is not a desire that is 'unspeakable', and thus *spoken about* because it has a social injunction against it (such as incest, paedophilia or homosexuality in the late Nineteenth Century). Rather, it is an erotics that is outside of dominant cultural articulations of sexuality (hetero/homo), and for a particular subject it is possibly outside of linguistic or discursive reasoning itself-outside of his or her available discourses. If this is the case, then what is beyond the reach of discourse cannot be re-cognised *by* discourse. This is the element of the performative subject which cannot be subjectified.

Thus, while experience may inhabit the symbolic order, it can at the same time be located at the bodily margins, the chora. For Derrida, what occurs in the chora is an 'experience' which "is above all not an experience, if one understands by this word a certain presence, whether it is sensible or intelligible or even a relation to the presence of the present in general" ("How to Avoid Speaking" 38-9). What might be experienced in that space in a particular subject is a particular bodily desire that is *beyond* the thinkability of gendered desire-trajectories of the hetero/homo binary. It is out of the bounds of discourse for that particular subject. This is not to suggest that there cannot or will never be ways of speaking this-for that subject. Nor is it to say that a discourse will not at some point become available to allow this experience or desiring style to be coherent in social terms. That is, a platform might be able to allow the emergence of that chora-located desire into a capacity that can be articulated with coherence and intelligibility. Indeed, when the younger person is asked to state a sexuality, such platforms might provide that subject with the capacity not only to act upon the desires

located in the fleshy body, but to be able to speak a disavowal of the binary categories and to claim that she or he is doing sexuality otherwise.

Translation and the Abyss of Suicide

The disjuncture between an inarticulable bodily residue of desire residing conceptually in a chora separate from the performative demands of dominant hetero/homo sexual coherence is implicated in the separation from sociality that makes suicide thinkable. The disjuncture can be described as two separate platforms of sexual logic located across an abyss of non-translatability between the two; one which is dominant and culturally-recognised, the other which is sensed but unassimilable and illogical in the broader social order. For the subject who does not have the discursive tools to reconcile the two-or, indeed, to resist the dominant hetero/homo order-there is no possibility of *translation* between the choral desire and the culturally-authorised hetero/homo discourses of sexuality. While all subjects are multiple, we all cover over the disjunctures and fragments to present intelligibility and uniformity, but for those who cannot this leads to what Jameson sees as the inherent schizophrenic fragmentation of the subject that normally is disavowed but which emerges on investigation (Jameson); a negative, debilitating identity breakdown and a reduction in the attachment to living. That is, the failure to be able to articulate oneself as a coherent, unified, whole and intelligible subject marginalises one from the conformity required for an attachment to sociality, belonging and participation which is the kernel of the cultural demand for subjectivity (Bell).

The desire that is produced in the chora 'speaks' a language, but one which cannot be understood. In other words, when the only available ways of speaking about or articulating sexual desire (for a particular performing subject) are in terms of the trajectories that are set up by the discursive hetero/homo binary, those desires which are not gendered, not 'gay' or 'straight' nor 'bisexual', cannot possibly be spoken, communicated, enacted, acted upon. For Derrida, "[t]here is something 'untouchable,' something of the original text that no translation can attain" (Ear of the Other 114). Thus, while discourse permits performative subjects to experience a sense of commonality, recognisability and shared intelligibility through the speaking of a certain language, the one who is driven by those desires produced in the language-of-the-chora remains marginal, outside of intelligibility, outside of the codes of performative sexuality, beyond understanding or 'sense'. That is, beyond understanding *for* the subject which is not to suggest that the *reading* of the subject's desires by others does not attempt a (mis)translation in order to (mis)recognise the subject as a lesbian/gay subject.

What is formed in the untranslatability of that which is contained in the chora is the *abyss* . I am suggesting here that desire produced *differently* within the field of the *beyond* of the chora can be an *overwhelming desire* ; 'overwhelming' precisely because discourse cannot performatively re-configure this space, nor assimilate it, nor speak with it or to it, and thereby the subject cannot *be* a subject meeting the demands for intelligible sociality within the dominant paradigms. While looking for a ground on which to defend a notion of social 'obligation' without the support of ethical foundations, John Caputo ruminates on suicide in terms of that which he labels "the abyss" (239). For Caputo, self-destruction in the form of suicide is a realm of 'safety' for those who are aware of the 'truth' that the "universe is a comfortless place" (240). That is, it is not an act undertaken, as humanist lesbian/gay rhetoric on the matter implies, by autonomous agents making a 'choice' or 'decision' that death is a better path than facing the 'homophobic world'. In the case of a queer-theoretical reading of youth suicide, the abyss is representative of the failure of discourse to allow one's bodily desires that have been produced or materialised alternatively, to be performed recognisably and contribute to *being* . It is the failure of synthesis between legitimated discourses of sexuality employing binary and gender-based 'explanations' of desire and the experience of desire at the level of the never-completely materialised flesh (chora) in a non-gendered capacity. The abyss signifies the discomfort of not having, in Caputo's words, a "deep and reassuring ground" (239), the grounding of a legitimate discourse or platform for logical identity expression.

Those who thus have no code for translation of embodied desire into sexual discourse by which to make erotic attachment coherent face only the emptiness of identity fragmentation and the inability to act per se. Suicide becomes feasible and effective in the face of the detachment from existence that is a detachment from being (coherence). As Caputo writes:

"I do not think that people who are driven to the edge are getting things all wrong so much as they are unreasonably right, right to an excess. That is their imbalance . . . They pay too close attention to life. They are scrupulously, infinitely attentive to life and-to their misfortune-they see through its masks, the very structures that have been put in place for our own protection (239-40)."

In characterising this de-synthesis or de-unification of the self as an abyss in the extremity of 'queer youth suicide', we can see that the suicidal youth who experiences the abyss does so because that youth, often under-exposed to the discourses which support and give the abyss a discursive logic, has no 'ground' or 'platform' on which to support or translate her or his own choral language of

non-gender-based sexual fluidity into terms recognisable by the dominant discourse that is viewed as the 'truth' of sexuality.

A variant on Caputo's perspective is to see not the abyss as the psycho-social cause of self-harm, but as a situation enacting intolerable pain and torment. Suicide, of course, is always about intention and often about conscious intention, much as suicide attempts are not necessarily themselves intentions towards self-activated death (O'Carroll et al. 245). Michael J. Kral, who understands suicide as a social logic rather than as an outcome of disorder, points out that it is caused only by the idea of suicide as a means of alleviating anguish: "it is a conscious option to kill oneself made by an individual, almost always to escape unbearable psychological pain" (245). What I am inferring here is that the breakdown of identity or the inability to translate residual and unnamed desires into a coherent and intelligible form of sexual identity is not causal, but a 'risk factor' for pain, anguish and torment which, for some, will be alleviated by suicide as a choice learned in sociality.

Pragmatics of Queer Theory

I would like to conclude by making some short remarks on queer theory and digital media theory as sites for pragmatic intervention schemes that can be used to address the problem of exclusionary discourses of sexuality that, as I have been arguing, can be implicated in some cases of marginal youth suicide. Given the focus on requiring a 'platform' for coherent sexual identity expression, it remains that one of the solutions is to expand the *availability* of discourses which provide platforms for identity coherence, making available a greater range of diverse sexualities through which one can recognise oneself and articulate erotics in a way that meets the cultural demand for intelligibility. This might include discourses which make queer, fluid and non-hetero/homo sexualities recognisable and hence liveable. The Internet is one realm that opens a few possibilities for the queer-theoretical expansion of sexualities. As Hillier & Harrison have concluded, the Internet provides some significant opportunities for young people to explore and practice non-heteronormative sexualities through online communicative tools, particularly in the face of exclusion in their immediate physical environments (83). This point can be extended to suggest that online spaces provide the capacity not just to explore and encounter discourses of positive homosexuality, but a broader range of sexual discourses or platforms for sexual identity that meet the needs of vulnerable, at-risk youth or younger persons who are unable to identify with dominant identity paradigms. However, from a digital practice and policy perspective, it is important not to over-simplify the Internet as a medium to all things alternative, nor to celebrate it as a space providing resources for the most diverse

groups.

If one of the pragmatic approaches to addressing queer youth suicide is to open the field of possibilities for identification, allowing younger persons whose sexualities are unrepresented to forge coherent identities, and if online digital communicative tools are to be one of the more practical ways in which a broader field of discourses can be 'made available', then two things need to happen. Firstly, the user must have not only an awareness of what it is that is being looked for online, but an understanding of a need to explore beyond the more narrow, legitimated discourses. This is not an easy thing to achieve without some wholesale shifts in the very ideas of sexuality in western cultures today. Enabling the right kind of searches for alternative discourses that help meet those 'residual' erotics that cannot be represented within the hetero/homo binary involves digital literacy, search capability, broad cultural literacy and an understanding of sexuality and sexual discourse-and if to be a tool intervening to reduce the suicide and self-harm risk described above, requires safe spaces (Hillier & Harrison 85) for exchange of ideas in a non-threatening capacity.

Secondly, a point that is often missed in celebratory accounts of the world wide web as a democratic space for diverse information is that just because the material is online does not mean it will be found. Search engines do not necessarily always bring up the most relevant information for the purposes of the user, and this can be the case if there is a search for material that is obscure. Rather, there are two elements in searches for online material that can, particularly in this case, direct the user in a way that is not necessarily to his or her advantage (for example, to further reinforcement of incompatible dominant discourses): (a) search engines such as Google and Yahoo use sophisticated algorithms for matching search queries with content, but the responses such algorithms provide are not intuitive enough to provide users with information which is relevant to personal circumstances (van House & Churchill 301); (b) search engine optimisation, which refers to strategies used by websites to ensure it gains a higher place in a search, "to be well regarded by the search engines" (Halavais 75). The most effective optimisation of a webpage occurs when consultants have been involved (Halavais 109) and this may work against the greater provision of information useful to the vulnerable subject.

Finally, the uptake of online service provision by mental health practitioners opens some significant advantages for at-risk and vulnerable youth of the sort described in this article. However, from a queer theoretical perspective it would be important to avoid digital media becoming the site of replication and further reinforcement of dominant discourses of sexuality as the 'answer' to what is

sometimes incorrectly perceived as identity confusion. Rather, queer theory needs to be utilised to further diversify the ideas and concepts of sexuality and sexual difference in the field of mental health both prior to and with the utilisation of digital spaces for interventionist services in the area of youth suicide.

Works cited

- Ahmed, Sara. *The Cultural Politics of Emotion* . Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2004.
- Barker, Chris. *Television, Globalization and Cultural Identities* . Buckingham: Open University Press, 1999.
- Battin, Margaret Pabst. *Ethical Issues in Suicide* . Englewood Cliffs, NJ.: Prentice-Hall, 1995.
- Bell, Vikki. "Performativity and Belonging: An Introduction." *Theory, Culture & Society* 16.2 (1999): 1-10.
- Butler, Judith. *Subjects of Desire: Hegelian Reflections in Twentieth-Century France.* New York: Columbia University Press, 1987.
- *Gender Trouble: Feminism and the Subversion of Identity.* London & New York: Routledge, 1990.
- *Bodies That Matter: On The Discursive Limits of 'Sex'.* London & New York: Routledge, 1993.
- "Appearances Aside." *California Law Review.* 88.1 (2000): 55-63.
- Califia, Pat. *Public Sex: The Culture of Radical Sex.* Pittsburgh, Penn.: Cleis Press, 1994.
- Caputo, John, D. *Against Ethics: Contributions to a Poetics of Obligation with Constant Reference to Deconstruction* . Bloomington and Indianapolis: Indiana University Press, 1993.
- Clough, Patricia T. "The Affective Turn: Political Economy, Biomedia and Bodies." *Theory, Culture & Society* 25.1 (2008): 1-22.
- Cover, Rob. "First Contact: Queer Theory, Sexual Identity, and 'Mainstream' Film." *International Journal of Gender and Sexuality* 5.1 (2000): 71-89.
- "Bodies, Movements and Desires: Lesbian/Gay Subjectivity and the Stereotype." *Continuum: Journal of Media & Cultural Studies* 18.1 (2004): 81-98.
- "From Butler To Buffy: Notes Towards a Strategy for Identity Analysis in Contemporary Television Narrative." *Reconstruction: Studies in Contemporary Culture,* 4.2 (2004). Online.
- "Queer Subjects of Suicide: Cultural Studies, Sexuality and Youth Suicide Research/Policy in New Zealand." *New Zealand Sociology* 20.1 (2005): 76-98.
- Creed, Barbara. *Media Matrix: Sexing the New Reality* . St. Leonards: Allen & Unwin, 2003.
- Derrida, Jacques. *Ear of the Other: Otobiography, Transference, Translation.* trans. Peggy Kamuf. New York: Schocken Books, 1985.
- "How to Avoid Speaking: Denials" (trans. Ken Frieden).

Languages of the Unsayable: The Play of Negativity in Literature and Literary Theory . Ed. Sanford Budick & Wolfgang Iser. New York: Columbia University Press, 1989. 3-70.
- Dorais, Michel, with Simon L. Lajeunesse. *Dead Boys Can't Dance: Sexual Orientation, Masculinity, and Suicide,* trans. Pierre Tremblay. Montreal & Kingston: McGill-Queen's University Press, 2004.
- Dowsett, Gary. "Bodyplay: Corporeality in a Discursive Silence." *Framing the Sexual Subject: The Politics of Gender, Sexuality and Power* . Ed. Richard Parker, Regina Maria Barbosa & Peter Aggleton. Berkeley & Los Angeles: University of California Press, 2000.
- Durkheim, Emile. *Suicide: A Study in Sociology,* trans. John A. Spaulding & George Simpson. London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1952.
- Evans, David T. *Sexual Citizenship: The Material Construction of Sexualities* . London & New York: Routledge, 1993.
- Farquhar, Clare. "Lesbian in a Post-Lesbian World? Policing Identity, Sex and Image." *Sexualities* 2.2 (2000): 219-236.
- Featherstone, Mike. *Undoing Culture: Globalization, Postmodernism and Identity* . London: Sage, 1995.
- Foucault, Michel. *The Archaeology of Knowledge,* trans. A.M. Sheridan Smith. London: Tavistock Publications, 1972.
- *Power/Knowledge: Selected Interviews & Other Writings 1972-1977,* trans. Colin Gordon *et al* . New York: Pantheon, 1980.
- Freud, Sigmund (1979). "My Views on the Part Played by Sexuality in the Aetiology of the Neuroses." *Penguin Freud Library,* vol. 10. London: Penguin, 1979. 67-81.
- Fullagar, Simone. "Wasted Lives: The Social Dynamics of Shame and Youth Suicide." *Journal of Sociology* 39.3 (2003): 291-307.
- Gaillot, Michel. *Multiple Meaning: Techno: An Artistic and Political Laboratory of the Present, Interviews with Jean-Luc Nancy & Michel Maffesoli,* trans. Warren Niesluchowski. Paris: Editions Dis Voir, 1998.
- Grosz, Elizabeth. *Sexual Subversions: Three French Feminists* . Sydney, Allen & Unwin, 1989.
- *Jacques Lacan: A Feminist Introduction.* Sydney: Allen & Unwin, 1990.
- *Volatile Bodies: Toward a Corporeal Feminism.* St. Leonards, NSW: Allen & Unwin, 1994.
- Halavais, Alexander. *Search Engine Society.* Cambridge: Polity, 2009.
- Hall, Donald E. *Subjectivity* . London & New York: Routledge, 2004.
- Hillier, Lynne & Harrison, Lyn. "Building Realities Less Limited Than Their Own: Young People Practising Same-Sex Attraction on the Internet." *Sexualities* 10.1 (2007): 82-100.
- Jameson, Fredric. "Postmodernism and Consumer Society." *Postmodern Culture.* Ed. Hal Foster. London: Pluto Press, 1985.

111-125.
- Kellner, Douglas. *Herbert Marcuse and the Crisis of Marxism.* Berkeley & Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1984.
- Kinz, Richard. Email to *GLB-News Listserv,* 5 January, 1998.
- Kral, Michael J. "Suicide as Social Logic." *Suicide & Life-Threatening Behavior* 24.3 (1994): 245-259.
- Latham, Rob. *Consuming Youth: Vampires, Cyborgs, & the Culture of Consumption* . Chicago & London: University of Chicago Press, 2002.
- Macdonald, Ron & Cooper, Trudi. "Young Gay Men and Suicide: A report of a Study Exploring the Reasons which Young Men Give for Suicide Ideation." *Youth Studies Australia* . 17.4 (1998):2-27.
- McDaniel, J. Stephen; Purcell, David & D'Augelli, Anthony R. "The Relationship Between Sexual Orientation and Risk for Suicide: Research Findings and Future Directions for Research and Prevention." *Suicide & Life-Threatening Behavior* 31.1 (2001): 84-105.
- McKnight, Jim. *Straight Science? Homosexuality, Evolution and Adaptation* . London & New York: Routledge, 1997.
- O'Carroll, Patrick W.; Berman, Alan L.; Maris, Ronald W.; Moscicki, Eve K.; Tanney, Bryan L. & Silverman, Morton M. "Beyond the Tower of Babel: A Nomenclature for Suicidology." *Suicide & Life-Threatening Behavior* 26.3 (1996): 237-252.
- Sedgwick, Eve Kosofsky. *Epistemology of the Closet* . London: Penguin, 1990.
- "How to Bring Your Kids Up Gay." *Fear of a Queer Planet: Queer Politics and Social Theory* . Ed. Michael Warner. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1993. 69-81.
- Van House, Nancy & Churchill, Elizabeth F. "Technologies of Memory: Key Issues and Critical Perspectives." *Memory Studies* 1.3 (2008): 295-310.
- Verhoeven, Deb. "Great Moments in Mutual Mastication: The Trials of Tracey Wigginton." *Cultural Studies: Pluralism and Theory* . Ed. David Bennett. Melbourne: Dept. of English, The University of Melbourne, 1993. 272-280.
- Weeks, Jeffrey. "History, Desire, and Identities." *Conceiving Sexuality: Approaches to Sex Research in a Postmodern World.* Ed. Richard G. Parker & John H. Gagnon. New York & London: Routledge, 1995. pp. 33-50.

Rob Cover